

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Previously Presented) The drive apparatus according to claim 10,
wherein

the first and second drive units are housed substantially within first and second rims of the first and second wheels, respectively.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Withdrawn / Previously Presented) The drive apparatus according to claim 10, wherein

the first and second inverters are further configured and arranged to share an input capacitor.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Withdrawn / Previously Presented) The drive apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising

a wheel speed sensor unit configured and arranged to detect speed of the first and second wheels, and

the driven wheel drive controller being configured to determine drive frequency of each of the first and second inverters based on the speed of the first and second wheels.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously Presented) The drive apparatus according to claim 10, wherein

the first and second non-permanent magnet electric motors are switched reluctance motors.

9. (Withdrawn / Previously Presented) The drive apparatus according to claim 10, wherein

the first and second non-permanent magnet electric motors are induction motors.

10. (Previously Presented) A drive apparatus for a vehicle comprising:
a first drive unit including at least a first non-permanent magnet electric motor configured and arranged to drive a first wheel, and a first reduction gear operatively coupled to the first non-permanent magnet electric motor to reduce speed of the first non-permanent magnet electric motor;

a second drive unit including at least a second non-permanent magnet electric motor configured and arranged to drive a second wheel disposed on an opposite side of the vehicle from the first wheel, and a second reduction gear operatively coupled to the second non-permanent magnet electric motor to reduce speed of the second non-permanent magnet electric motor;

first and second inverters configured and arranged to supply electric power separately to the first and second non-permanent magnet electric motors, respectively; and

a driven wheel drive controller configured to control the first and second inverters to separately control a torque of each of the first and second non-permanent magnet electric motors, the driven wheel drive controller being further configured to control the first and second inverters to stop flows of drive currents to the first and second non-permanent magnet electric motors when a vehicle speed is equal to or greater than a prescribed vehicle speed.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Original) The drive apparatus according to claim 10, wherein each of the first and second non-permanent magnet electric motors includes a ball bearing unit having a maximum permitted rotation speed that is greater than a maximum drive rotation speed of each of the first and second non-permanent magnet electric motors that corresponds to a prescribed vehicle speed for stopping electric conduction to each of the first and second non-permanent magnet electric motors.

13. (Original) The drive apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the ball bearing unit of each of the first and second non-permanent magnet electric motors is a ceramic ball bearing.

14. (Original) The drive apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the driven wheel drive controller is further configured to stop supply of drive currents from the first and second inverters to the first and second non-permanent magnet electric

motors, respectively, and allow flows of regenerative electric currents when a vehicle speed is equal to or greater than a prescribed vehicle speed.

15. (Currently Amended) The drive apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising

a power source configured and arranged to drive third and fourth wheels, [[: and]]

~~a control unit~~ the driven wheel drive controller being further configured to selectively switch between a four wheel drive mode and a two wheel drive mode.

16. (Original) The drive apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the power source is an internal combustion engine.

17. (Original) The drive apparatus according to claim 16, further comprising a generator mechanically coupled to the internal combustion engine and electrically coupled to the first and second non-permanent magnet electric motors.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously Presented) A drive apparatus for a vehicle including a pair of primary drive wheels driven by a power train and a pair of driven wheels, comprising non-permanent magnet electric motor means for independently and separately driving first and second wheels of the driven wheels;

gear reduction means operatively coupled to the non-permanent magnet electric motor means, for independently and separately reducing speed of the non-permanent magnet electric motor means;

first and second electrical power supplying means for supplying electric power separately to the non-permanent magnet electric motor means for independently and separately driving the first and second wheels of the driven wheels; and

a driven wheel drive controlling means for controlling the first and second electrical power supplying means for separately controlling a torque of the non-permanent magnet electric motor means, the driven wheel drive controlling means further including a function for controlling the first and second electrical power supplying means to stop flows of drive currents to the non-permanent magnet electric motor means when a vehicle speed is equal to or greater than a prescribed vehicle speed.

20. (Canceled)